

ABSTRACT

AIDS Awareness Among Registered Public Health Nurses

R. R. Tiwari, S. P. Zodpey, S.M. Khandare, V. D. Moze

AIDS has emerged as a major problem throughout the world and also in India. By virtue of their occupation, the health care personnel are at high risk of acquiring the HIV infection^{1,2}. Nursing professionals are one of the subgroup of health care personnel who are at potential risk of getting HIV infection. Thus awareness regarding AIDS in this group is crucial for two reasons. One for AIDS prevention³ and control and secondly for providing education and counselling to patients infected with HIV and their subordinates. Hence this study was carried out to collect baseline information regarding AIDS awareness in public health Nurses.

Material and Methods

The questionnaire administered was virtually identical with that used in a previous study in San Francisco³. The only changes were made those required to adapt it to the Indian setting and occupation. The study was carried out in November 1998 in order to test baseline existing knowledge and attitudes of registered public health Nurses of Public Health Nurses Training School, Nagpur. All the 30 Public Health Nurses were females. Questionnaires were administered during school hours by the investigators who invigilated to ensure that the questionnaire were answered seriously and they gave their genuine opinion.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 revealed that 73.3% public health Nurses quoted AIDS is not at all serious, it is just like getting cold. 80%

Table 1: Awareness about general information of AIDS

Awareness	Yes	No	Don't Know
AIDS not at all serious, like getting cold	22(73.3)	6(20)	2(6.7)
Life threatening disease	24(80)	5(16.7)	1(3.3)
All are susceptible	21(70)	7(23.3)	2(6.7)
Loses immunity	28(93.4)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)
Leads to 143 opportunistic infections	18(60)	8(26.7)	4(13.3)
Leads to death	11(36.7)	16(53.3)	3(10)

[Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages]

Nurses have known that AIDS is a life-threatening disease. 70% considered that all are susceptible to AIDS. 93.4% have believed that there is loss of immunity but only 60% believed that it leads to opportunistic infections.

Table 2 revealed that only 20% Nurses have still considered that cause of AIDS is unknown while majority (90%) have accepted correctly about viral aetiology. Regarding awareness about AIDS transmission 93.3% have

quoted correctly that transmission is possible by having sex with AIDS patients, but only 70% have knowledge about the possibility of a newborn baby to get AIDS from infected mothers. (Table 3)

Table 4 shows that 73.4%

Public Health Nurses correctly have known about prevention of AIDS by use of condoms. Only 16.7% wrongly stated that there is a vaccine available, while 43.3% did not know whether vaccine against AIDS is available or not.

Studies have shown that the risk increases with the lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS⁵. Thus, it is aptly said that awareness is the only method for

prevention against AIDS^{6,8}.

Moreover, more knowledge about AIDS expressed a positive attitude to care for AIDS patients as reported by Gignac et al⁹ and

Stiernborg¹⁰. At the end of study the misconceptions regarding AIDS among registered Public Health Nurses have been corrected.



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AUTHORS

1. Lecturer, Deptt. Of Preventive & Social Medicine, Indira Gandhi Medical College, Nagpur.

2. Associate Professor, Deptt. Of Preventive & Social Medicine & Co-opted Fellow, Clinical Epidemiology Unit, Government Medical College, Nagpur.

3. Staff Nurse, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Memorial Hospital & Government Medical College, Nanded.

4. Lady Superintendent, Public Health Nurses' Training School, Nagpur.

athlete often complains of sharp shooting pain extending to the toes. Treatment consists of padding and cortisone injection. Surgical removal for those who do not respond to this treatment.

Stress fracture

Stress fractures are caused by repetitive stress on the foot for prolonged periods of time. Commonly seen in metatarsals, but may involve any of the foot bones. Symptoms include swelling and pain confined to a focal area. Treatment consists of immobilizing the foot in a rigid fracture shoe with a compression dressing for 3-4 weeks.

Role of the Nurse

There is no doubt that the nurse, no matter what her speciality, is frequently consulted on problems associated with a sports related injury.

Sports' Nursing is an evolving subspecialty in orthopedics. The Nurse plays a vital role in the education and management of the athlete's program and participates in the rehabilitation team when injury occurs. Because athletes have the drive to return to an active life style, sports Nursing is interesting, fast paced and rewarding.

Dealing with an injured athlete, no matter what his/her age is can be much like dealing with a child. They are frightened, in pain and can easily be confused by advice from parents, teammates, coaches and trainers.

An informed and empathic nurse can be invaluable in eliciting history from the patient and other sources, if necessary, before even seeing the physician for diagnosis. Physical therapy modalities and close communication with therapists and trainers become the responsibility of the Nurse. The Nurse must understand and develop ability to deal with the psychological repercussions of an athlete being away from sport for a period of time, be it short or lengthy.

Special needs of athletes must be considered when planning the care of these patients. These patients wish to return to competition safely but rapidly. Support, encouragement and understanding from a knowledgeable health professional are invaluable.

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Table 3: Awareness regarding AIDS transmission

Mode Of Transmission	Yes	No	Don't Know
Kissing	10(33.4)	17(56.6)	3(10)
Touch with patients	2(6.7)	24(80)	4(13.3)
Through food	5(16.7)	21(70)	4(13.3)
Contact with fomites	5(16.7)	17(56.6)	8(26.7)
Being around the AIDS patients	3(10)	24(80)	3(10)
Having sex with person with AIDS	28(93.3)	2(6.7)	
Transplacental	21(70)	2(6.7)	7(23.3)
Shaking hands	8(26.7)	17(56.6)	5(16.7)
Blood transfusion	28(93.4)	1(3.3)	1(3.3)
Sharing needle	25(83.3)	2(6.7)	3(10)

[Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages]

Table 4. Awareness regarding AIDS treatment and prevention

Treatment/Prevention	Yes	No	Don't Know
Use of condom	22(73.4)	4(13.3)	4(13.3)
Exercise helps to prevent AIDS	8(26.7)	17(56.6)	5(16.7)
Vaccine available	5(16.7)	12(40)	13(43.3)
AIDS can be cured	6(20)	20(66.7)	4(13.3)
No treatment available	12(40)	4(13.3)	14(46.7)
Can be cured if treated early	16(53.3)	8(26.7)	6(20)

[Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages]

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